

DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING

2014 'T' Street, Suite 210, Sacramento, CA 95814-6835
(916) 227-2873 TTY (800) 700-2320 Fax (916) 227-2870
www.dfeh.ca.gov



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CONTACT: Dia S. Poole
(916) 227-2873

DFEH AND U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT RENEW PARTNERSHIP TO FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION RELATED JOB DISCRIMINATION

Sacramento – The California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) today announced the signing of an agreement with the U. S. Department of Justice Office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC) renewing their joint commitment to fight immigration related job discrimination. The Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) between DFEH and OSC was unveiled at a press conference this morning at the State Capitol in Sacramento, CA.

Dennis Hayashi, DFEH Director, was joined at the podium by John Trasviña, the Washington, D.C.-based Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices. "Execution of this Memorandum of Understanding signifies this Administration's ongoing commitment to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly when seeking employment within the State of California," Hayashi said. "We are committed to providing more education and technical assistance to inform employers and employees of the proper procedures to follow to avoid illegal hiring and employment practices based on their perception of an individual's ancestry or national origin."

The DFEH investigates and prosecutes complaints of discrimination based on national origin or ancestry. The Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) grants DFEH primary jurisdiction in cases where the employer has five or more employees; OSC enforces cases where an employer has four to 14 employees. California state law also allows remedies for victims of discrimination that exceed those granted under federal law, including actual damages not to exceed \$150,000 and administrative fines in the same amount.

The M.O.U. between DFEH and OSC updates and improves an existing partnership and strengthens the inroads that have been made in California through many of the state's community-based organizations. DFEH and OSC will work together to educate and train employers and employees on how to recognize and prevent workplace discrimination through training seminars and presentations.

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DFEH enforces laws prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, familial status, source of income and disability. Further information about DFEH and its services may be obtained by calling toll-free 1-800-884-1684 or by accessing DFEH's website at www.dfeh.ca.gov.

Individuals can contact OSC for additional information by calling toll-free 1-800-255-7688.

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